



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Greg Meszaros, Director
Austin Water Utility

DATE: March 10, 2008

SUBJECT: University of Texas Interlocal

At the March 27, 2008 City Council meeting there will be an item for your consideration to ratify an interlocal agreement with the University of Texas. In September 2007, the Utility executed a contract under the City Manager's spending authority with the University. However, it has come to our attention that since the University is a quasi-governmental entity; the Utility should have entered into an interlocal agreement rather than a contract, which requires Council approval.

The Austin Water Utility contracted with the University of Texas at Austin (University) to research, study, summarize findings, and give recommendations on ways to lower the amount of polymer used at the City's Hornsby Bend Biosolids Facility for sludge thickening.

The Hornsby Bend facility uses polymer to thicken wastewater treatment sludge before use in composting. The amount of the polymer used per dry ton of sludge has risen dramatically in the last three years. This study will look at implementation issues associated with the recommendations of a previous study. This includes helping to oversee trials of changed operation of the thickeners and belt presses at Hornsby Bend.

In addition, laboratory-scale digesters will be operated under a variety of conditions (including reduced influent solids concentration and reduced detention time) to determine the effects on solids destruction and dewaterability of the sludges. On the basis of these laboratory studies, recommendations on possible changes to the operation of the anaerobic digesters at Hornsby Bend will be made. If such changes are implemented on a trial basis at the plant during the course of this study, the consultant will help oversee the required data acquisition to judge the merits of the trial.

The Utility has allocated \$47,700 from the FY 2007-08 Operating budget for this project. This amount covers the cost for the consultant making up to four oral reports. At the conclusion of each quarter, the Consultant shall submit a written report summarizing the work. The University's Office of Accounting will submit a financial report of expenses relating to the research program. The City will pay the consultant an amount equal to its expenditures and reasonable overhead in conducting the project.

Please contact me if you have any further questions at 972-0101.



Greg Meszaros, Director
Austin Water Utility

Cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
Rudy Garza, Assistant City Manager